

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 00401 140745Z

16

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-11 OMB-01 AID-05 SY-05

SCCT-01 OPR-02 A-01 EB-07 USPS-01 DHA-02 ORM-02 OC-05

CCO-00 /106 W

----- 088475

O R 140715Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8112

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 401

DELIVER NEA/ARN DRAPER OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, LE

SUBJECT: 0900 LEBANON REPORT

1. SITUATION CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE DURING THE EVENING, WITH NOT UNEXPECTED SPREADING OF THE FIGHTING FOLLOWING ENCIRCLEMENT OF SOME REFUGEE CAMPS BY THE CHRISTIANS. FIGHTING REPORTEDLY VERY HEAVY IN ZAHLE. HEAVY FIGHTING WAS REPORTED IN BEIRUT ITSELF AND SUBURBS.

2. CONTINUING FIGHTING IN HOTEL AREA ADJACENT TO EMBASSY REMAINS CAUSE OF CONCERN. WHILE NO FIRING DELIBERATELY DIRECTED AT EMBASSY, THERE IS SNIPER PROBLEM IN THE STREET OUTSIDE AND ALL EMBASSY PERSONNEL MUST BE BROUGHT IN FROM RENDEZVOUS POINT AT RIVERIA HOTEL IN BULLET-PROOF VEHICLES.

3. LARGE FIRE IN PORT AREA HAS ADDED TO ECONOMIC DETERIORATION. FURTHER SIGNS OF GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE BREAKDOWN IN SUCH THINGS AS ANNOUNCEMENT THAT AUTHORITIES NO LONGER ABLE
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TO CHLORINATE PART OF CITY'S WATER SUPPLY AND THAT POSTAL

METERS CAN NO LONGER BE USED FOR FRANKING LETTERS.

4. ON THE POLITICAL FRONT, MEETING OF PRESIDENT WITH MARONITE POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS IS TO BE FOLLOWED BY MEETING WITH SPIRITUAL AND POLITICAL LEADERS OF OTHER CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES. ALL THIS IS IN ANTICIPATION OF HOPED-FOR TRIP TO DAMASCUS POSSIBLY ON SATURDAY. THERE IS FURTHER TALK OF POLITICAL INTERVENTION BY OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES IN THE HOPE OF SOLVING THE LEBANESE CRISIS, BUT THIS TIME IN COORDINATION WITH SYRIA. WITHOUT SYRIAN COORDINATION, INTERVENTION OF OTHER ARAB STATES WOULD PROBABLY CAUSE MORE HARM THAN GOOD AS IT HAS IN THE PAST.

5. IN SUM, THE SPREADING OF THE MILITARY CONFLICT CREATES FURTHER PRESSURES FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION, AND IN A SENSE IT IS A QUESTION OF SEEING HOW MUCH WILL REMAIN BY THE TIME THAT THE POLITICAL FORCES ARE FINALLY ABLE TO PREVAIL. WARING

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NNN

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